



Distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee, Chairs Osten and Walker, Vice Chairs Exum and Hartley and Ranking Members Berthel and Nuccio,

My name is Johanna Schubert and I'm the Director of the Connecticut Hospital Violence Intervention Program Collaborative at Hartford Communities that Care. A nonprofit in the North End of Hartford. Our agency is joining GHIAA, a network of over 50 diverse congregations, to ask for a 20 million dollar allocation to support community violence reduction over the two year budget cycle. Thank you for the opportunity to testify here today.

My name is Johanna Schubert, I serve as the Director of the Connecticut Hospital Violence Intervention Program Collaborative (CT HVIP) at Hartford Communities that Care (HCTC). The Collaborative works to expand and strengthen the safety net of Hospital Violence Intervention Programs across the state. Our work, in collaboration with the legislature, and other partners such as the Connecticut Hospital Association has helped establish Connecticut as a national leader in violence prevention policy.

Hospital Based Violence Intervention (HVIP) is a specific, evidence based methodology that involves partnerships between hospitals and frontline and community agencies. In 2004, Hartford Communities that Care and Trinity Saint Francis Hospital established the first recognized HVIP partnership in the state of Connecticut, and 6th in the nation to be recognized by the Health Alliance for Violence Intervention (The HAVI) Since that partnership formed, they have served more than 2,200 victims and their families.

During the 2022 legislative session, the CT HVIP collaborative advocated for a permanent commission to continue to advise the legislature on evidence based and community centered violence prevention strategies. Signed into law in the Spring of 2022, the newly established commission was tasked with allocating \$2.9 million in the fiscal year 2023 budget adjustment bill. This is a good start, and a good faith effort, but it is not enough to address the problem of community violence statewide.

Although a 20 million dollar allocation was not specifically in the Governor's budget, it is necessary and will save lives. There are relatively few of us out there doing the work and these funds will allow for us to expand, enhance and sustain already existing programming as well as to launch new evidence based and community centered programs.

At the CT HVIP and Hartford Communities that Care, we understand the devastating impact that trauma can have on those vulnerable to gun violence. We also know that with dedicated and sustainable revenue we can make a greater impact in slowing the rates of violence.

Please don't hesitate to be in touch with any questions,

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